employment, reduction in cost of intermediation leading to lower prices for the consumers and better price realization to the farmers and development of real estate. No decision has been taken on allowing Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in retail sector. The Government is carefully weighing the advantage and the concerns expressed in certain quarters on the likely impact of opening up the retail sector to FDI.

Black Marketing of ration Items by FPS holders

3395. SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI THENNALA G. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI K.B. KRISHNAMURTHY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the people living below poverty line are not getting the ration items forcing them to purchase the same from the open market at high prices; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the action Government propose to take to check the black-marketing of ration items by fair price shop holders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) No such instances has come to the notice of the Government. Under the Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) Rice, Wheat and Sugar is being allocated to the State Government/ UTs. Kerosene (SKO) allocation is also made by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas to the State Governments/UTs for distribution under the PDS network. TPDS is supplemental in nature. 35 kg foodgrains per ration card per month is supplied under the system, which meets approximately 50% of the requirement of a average family of 5.5 members. The rest of the foodgrains requirement is bought by the families from the market. Distribution of the ration items to the beneficiaries in an efficient and transparent manner through the Fair Price Shops (FPSs) is the responsibility of the concerned State Governments/UT Administrations.

The following measures have been taken by the Government to reach the PDS items to the beneficiaries :—

i. The Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 was issued in order to streamline the functioning of the PDS and to make the same more effective and accountable. Any offence committed in voilation of the provisions of the Order invokes criminal liability under Section 7 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955;

ii. The State Governments and the Union Territory Administrations have been asked to actively involve the Panchayati Raj Institutions to monitor the functioning of the Fair Price Shops, as a meausre of social audit;

iii. The States and Union Territories have also been asked to constitute Vigilance Committee at the State, District, Block and FPS levels to oversee the functioning of PDS;

iv. With a view to efficiently reaching PDS commodities to the consumers in a transparent manner, a model Citizen's Charter has been issued by the Central Government for adoption by the State Governments/UT Administrations;

v. Under the Area Officers Scheme, the Senior Officers of the Government visits their allocated States/UTs to conduct review of the TPDS. The observations made by the Area Officers in their reports are sent to the concerned State Government/UT for taking necessary action.

To check the black marketing of the SKO, Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) undertake inspections of SKO dealers and take action against guilty dealers based on the provisions of the Marketing Discipline Guidelines/ Dealership Agreement. The action taken includes termination of dealership, imposition of fines, suspention of supplies, warning, etc.